25) (Newly Presented) The method of Claim 6 wherein the processing method may occur without the scanner having to scan the image, and wherein the user may select one or more programmed buttons on the scanner to instruct the data read from the media to be directed to a computer program for processing, faxing, archiving, emailing or printing.

REMARKS

New grounds of rejection are made by the Examiner in light of Murata (US 6,111,659). The claims have been amended and one claim added which do not read on the Murata patent. However, it is respectfully suggested that the Examiner is misunderstanding the current invention and its reading or lack thereof on the prior art. Literal reading of the claims without any weight given to the specification is not in compliance with the MPEP (*In re Abele*, 684 F.2d 902, 907, 214 USPQ 682, 687 (CCPA 1982). There is no reasonable attempt to determine the entirety of what the inventor in this case is seeking to patent.

Regarding Claim 6, now amended, Murata teaches an image acquisition apparatus in the form of a photocopier wherein such apparatus may be connected to a PC or allow insertion of various media storage devices. Murata does not, however, offer the process the amended claims and specification herein provide, nor actually the claims and specification prior to this amendment.

Murata requires the data stored on a removable media to be scanned and printed on the copier itself (Col. 3, lines 48-65). Murata further discloses requiring a user to place original paper documents onto the platen of the copier to be processed by its inventive method (Col. 5, lines 10-50). The present invention is not reliant upon scanning the stored image, but rather allows for circumvention of the scanning process itself, and allows the image data on the inserted media to be automatically processed and sent to a specified application without the user doing anything but simply inserting the storage media [0032-0033]. In this vein, the two card reader slots in the

scanner are somewhat of a design issue, but their utility suggested this Application to necessitate a utility filing.

Murata discloses an "offline print function" (Cols. 7 and 8), however this requires a user to install his or her memory device into the copier and download a print function file (Col. 7, lines 1-7). The user then must place the media in his or her computer for downloading data into same (Col. 8, lines 1-8). After proceeding through multiple steps wherein the user must make selections, the user in Murata then must place the media back into the copier to proceed with the data and commands programmed onto the storage media (Col. 8, lines 10-65). This is vastly different than the inventive method, wherein a user can simply select a preference one time and the data is sent to a fax or email client, printed, or archived without the user doing anything but inserting the storage media into one of the two card slots on the flatbed scanner.

There is no transfer of media from one piece of hardware to another and back again as in Murata, and no actual scanning function required. The inventive method provides for an automatic processing of data on storage media with or without actual scan as a way to solve a multi-step process as in Murata and other prior art. The inventive scanner is simply a flatbed scanner with two card slots which serve as an added feature to the scanner and allows the user an easy and automatic method to process stored data on various media types without having to print or scan or provide a set of commands.

Regarding Claim 23, also now amended, Murata again teaches a copier wherein a user may insert a storage device. However, as detailed above, Murata requires multiple steps of a user, and does not teach automatic processing without user intervention. The entirety of the Murata patent discloses the steps required of a user, and the further requirement of actually scanning documents derived from inserted media (Col. 10, lines 47-65 and Col. 11, lines 1-65). This does not read into

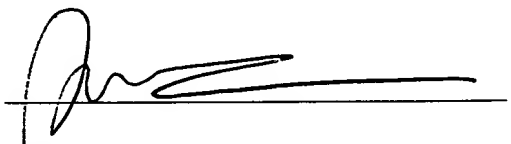
the inventive Claim 23 as there is no requirement for a user to input commands, or to remove and insert media from one device to another.

Regarding Claim 24, now amended, Murata does not teach automatic processing of data without user intervention, but again teaches the steps detailed above. The inventive method provides for elimination of user intervention, and does not require removal and insertion of media from one device to another, nor an actual scan of media or documents.

Newly presented Claim 25 provides for a similar method wherein an actual scan is not required. The user inserts the media with data thereupon, and presses one of several pre-programmed scanner buttons. The directed media data then goes to an email client, fax, archive, or maybe printed. There is no requirement for a scan, or for a document to be printed and subsequently scanned, or for any action by the user aside from pressing a single button. None of the present claims read on the Murata art.

With the amended claims and the remarks herein, Applicant believes that this Application now stands in allowable form and continued examination is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Ron van Os, Applicant

11/03/09

Date

Claims:

1) (Cancelled)

2) (Withdrawn) An image acquisition apparatus connected to at least one USB equipped computer, comprising: a) one or more digital card reader slots to accept transmittal means for inputting image data into a control circuit within said apparatus; b) transmittal means for sending said image data from said control circuit through the USB system of said computer from one or more digital card reader slots; c) interface means for said control circuit to receive instructions from, and send data to, control software on said computer;

3) (Withdrawn) An apparatus as in claim 2, further comprising simple control means for directing complex operations of said control circuit and said control software directly from the outside of said apparatus, said means comprising: a) at least one button a series of buttons on said apparatus wherein said button buttons have a function determined by said control software indicating that button to direct a scanned image to result in a fax, email, print job or archive command; b) an interface for said button to direct said control circuit and said control software.

4) (Withdrawn) An apparatus as in claim 3, wherein said image input means further comprising a flatbed scanner, said scanner containing one or more digital card reader slots which may accommodate at least one of a Compact Memory card reader, a Smart Media card reader, a PC or PCMCIA card reader, a Memory Stick reader, a Multi Media card reader, a Secure Digital card reader, and an IBM Microdrive reader.

5) (Cancelled)

6) (Currently Amended) An image processing method in an image acquisition apparatus connected to at least one USB equipped computer, comprising: a) an image input step for inputting image data into a control circuit within said apparatus; b) a transmittal step for sending said image data from said control circuit through the USB system of said computer; c) an interface step for said control circuit to receive instructions from, and send data to, control software on said computer upon detection of the insertion of the appropriate media into at least one of a Compact Flash

Memory card reader, a Smart Media card reader, a PC or PCMCIA Card reader, a Memory Stick reader, a Multi Media card reader, a Secure Digital card reader, and a IBM Microdrive reader, wherein the inventive software automatically launches a user interface (computer program application) upon insertion and detection thereof, with or without the scanner actually scanning an image, and directs the scanned data to a pre-selected application as initially specified by the user wherein said application launches and proceeds with data processing without requiring the user to intercede. ~~offers one or more user options to process the data without having to press a button on the scanner~~.

7) (Withdrawn) A method as in claim 3, further comprising simple control steps for optional directing complex operations of said control circuit and said control software directly from the outside of said apparatus, said steps comprising: a) providing at least one button on said apparatus wherein said button has a function determined by said control software; b) providing an interface for said button to direct said control circuit and said control software.

8) (Withdrawn) A method as in claim 7, wherein said image input step further comprises providing a scanner, said scanner comprising: a) a transparent platform for placing items to be scanned, said items comprising photographs, documents, or drawings, and said platform having rectangular dimensions; b) optical scanning hardware for scanning images of said items, wherein said hardware includes a scanning module slidably installed inside said housing, said scanning module being approximately as wide as one of the dimensions of said transparent platform, said scanning module comprising: i) a mechanism and assembly for moving said module along one of the axes of said transparent platform; ii) a bottom light source for emitting light towards said items, iii) an image converter for converting said image of the item into a digital image. c) a closeable top with dimensions slightly larger than the dimensions of said transparent platform, hingedly attached to said housing so that said top covers said transparent platform when closed.

9) (Withdrawn) A method comprising: a) persistently monitoring any monitorable input means of an image acquisition apparatus; b) determining whether said input means have image-containing media therein; c) determining the quantity of image data files in said media; d) selecting at least one image data file from said media; e) transmitting said at least one image data file from said image

acquisition apparatus to a computer; f) providing said image data file to a consumer-selected computer application.

10) (Withdrawn) A method as in claim 9 further comprising: a) persistently monitoring any buttons on said image acquisition apparatus; b) determining whether any said buttons have been pressed; c) selecting the appropriate consumer-selected computer application to which to provide said image data based on the predefined functions of said buttons.

11) (Withdrawn) A method as in claim 10 further comprising: a) determining whether there is a scanner associated with said image acquisition apparatus; b) selecting a set of scanning criteria as chosen by the consumer; and c) scanning an item on the transparent platform of said scanner at said selected set of scanning criteria where there is no media card in said input means.

12) (Withdrawn) A method as in claim 11 wherein said consumer-selected computer application is selected from an application to transfer said image data files to an Internet-based professional photograph printing company, an application that launches said consumer's e-mail program and attaches said image data files to an e-mail created by said e-mail program, an application that launches said consumer's fax program and prepares a fax with said image in said fax for said consumer to address, an application to open a printer selection menu to allow said consumer to print said image on a selected printer, an application that archives said image data files in a convenient manner, and an application that presents the image data file to any other application on said consumer's computer for said any other application to use as an input into said any other application.

13) (Withdrawn) A method as in claim 12 wherein said consumer can selectively configure said computer application choices.

14) (Withdrawn) Computer-readable media comprising one or more computer-executable instruction sets that, when executed, direct a computer to: a) persistently monitor any monitorable input means of an image acquisition apparatus; b) determine whether said input means have image-containing media therein; c) determine the quantity of image data files in said media; d) select at least one image data file from said media; e) transmit said at least one image data file from said

image acquisition apparatus to a computer; f) provide said image data file to a consumer-selected computer application.

15) (Withdrawn) Computer-readable media comprising one or more computer-executable instruction sets as in claim 14 that, when executed, direct a computer to: a) persistently monitor any buttons on said image acquisition apparatus; b) determine whether any said buttons have been pressed; c) select the appropriate consumer-selected computer application to which to provide said image data based on the predefined functions of said buttons.

16) (Withdrawn) Computer-readable media comprising one or more computer-executable instruction sets as in claim 15 that, when executed, direct a computer to: a) determine whether there is a scanner associated with said image acquisition apparatus; b) select a set of scanning criteria as chosen by the consumer; and c) scan an item on the transparent platform of said scanner at said selected set of scanning criteria where there is no media card in said input means.

17) (Withdrawn) Computer-readable media comprising one or more computer-executable instruction sets as in claim 13 that, when executed, direct a computer to: a) launch an application that allows the consumer to customize which applications are launched with which parameters at the press of which buttons on said image acquisition apparatus.

18) (Withdrawn) Computer-readable media comprising one or more computer-executable instruction sets as in claim 14 wherein: a) said persistent monitoring occurs in a process boundary with the kernel driver, low level driver, and high level user interface; b) said program launching application runs in a process separated from said persistent monitoring process; and c) said applications launched by said program launching applications run in their own processes.

19) (Withdrawn) Computer-readable media comprising one or more computer-executable instruction sets as in claim 17 wherein: a) said persistent monitoring occurs in a process boundary with the kernel driver, low level driver, and high level user interface; b) said program launching application runs in a process separated from said persistent monitoring process; c) said applications launched by said program launching applications run in their own processes; and d) said button configuration application runs in its own process, separate from said persistent monitoring process.

20) (Cancelled)

21) (Cancelled)

22) (Cancelled)

23) (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 6, wherein the processing method is accomplished by insertion of any of said media into one of two card reader slots contained within a flatbed scanner wherein the data read from said media is processed without requiring the scanner to scan the image, and the image data is processed automatically as in Claim 6 without requiring user intervention ~~scanning device independent of mechanical means or capabilities other than a flatbed scanner connected to a USB equipped computer~~.

24) (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 6 wherein the processing method may be initiated solely upon insertion of any of said media, wherein the data read from said media is processed without requiring the scanner to scan the image, and whereupon a user interface is automatically launched on said connected computer without further steps by a user; said user interface providing one or more options for further processing of data obtained from said media.

25) (Newly Presented) The method of Claim 6 wherein the processing method may occur without the scanner having to scan the image, and wherein the user may select one or more programmed buttons on the scanner to instruct the data read from the media to be directed to a computer program for processing, faxing, archiving, emailing or printing.